



WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS

State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development
Office of Economic Advisors

FOR NORTHWEST WISCONSIN COUNTIES

ASHLAND, BAYFIELD, BURNETT, DOUGLAS, IRON, PRICE, RUSK, SAWYER, TAYLOR, WASHBURN

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2005

Starting in October 2005, there will only be a quarterly edition of the Workforce Observation that will review the region's labor market over the previous quarter as well as featuring contemporary economic and demographic topics. Monthly workforce data for metropolitan areas is available from the home-page for the Office of Economic Advisors at http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/oea/xls/wi_msa_quick_table.xls and for non-metropolitan counties at http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/oea/xls/county_quick_table.xls. E-mail alerts will continue for the quarterly publications. Please contact the author if you have questions.

Unemployment Rates Plummet in some Northwest Counties

The number of residents with jobs in Northwest Wisconsin increased in July reducing the number of unemployed and lowering the regional unemployment rate. In July the unemployment rate for Northwest Wisconsin was 4.9 percent, down from 5.2 percent in June and matched the rate from twelve months earlier.

The northwest area unemployment rate declined when seven of the ten counties in the region reported fewer unemployed residents in July. Five counties in the region, Rusk, Price, Bayfield, Washburn and Sawyer, were among the counties in the state that showed the greatest reductions in unemployment rate. The Rusk County unemployment rate plummeted from 6.4 percent in June to 5.0 percent in July, the Price rate declined from 5.3 to 4.4 percent, and the Bayfield rate dropped from 4.8 to 4.0 percent. In Washburn County the unemployment rate declined from 5.6 percent in June to 4.8 percent in July and in Sawyer County the rate dropped from 5.3 to 4.5 percent. Unemployment rates also declined in Burnett County from 4.8 to 4.3 percent and in Taylor County from

4.5 to 4.0 percent.

Even though the regional rate dropped to 4.9 percent it remains higher than the State of Wisconsin unemployment rate in July of 4.6 percent, not seasonally adjusted. Also there were three northwest counties that were among only eight in the state that reported higher unemployment rates in July.

In Ashland County the unemployment rate rose from 5.8 percent in June to 7.0 percent in July, in Iron the rate increased from 6.8 to 7.9 percent, and in Douglas the unemployment rate rose from 4.6 to 4.8 percent. In all three counties the increase was temporary and due to short-term reductions by local employers following the July 4th holiday. As a result of the higher rates, however, Iron and Ashland counties had the third and fourth highest rates in the state.

Every July the region must absorb an influx of laid off workers as school payrolls are reduced during the summer months. This year jobs with government units declined from 15,100 in June to 14,100 in July. Most of that reduction occurred in Douglas County with the loss, mostly temporary, of 850 government jobs.

Beyond the reduction in public sector jobs employers in other sectors were adding workers in July. The greatest increase in jobs occurred with leisure and hospitality employers found primarily in Sawyer, Bayfield and Douglas counties. In July there were 9,200 jobs with leisure and hospitality employers in the northwest, roughly 375 more than in June and slightly more than one year ago.

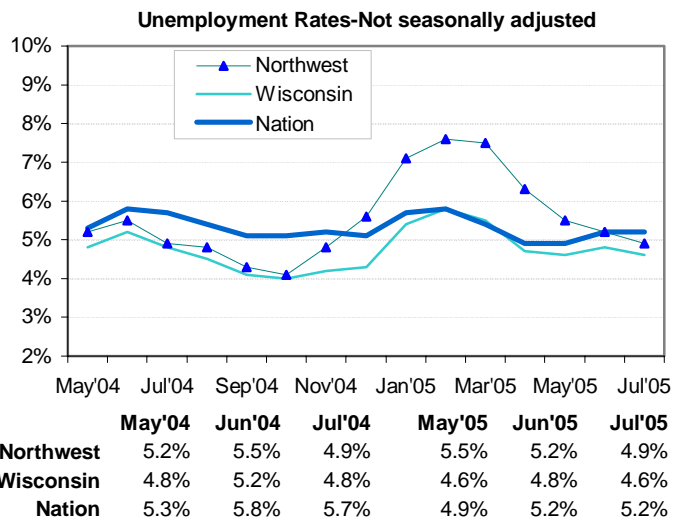
The second greatest increase in jobs occurred with construction and natural resources employers where total employment climbed from 4,200 in June to 4,300 in July. Here the increase was split among the ten northwest counties.

There was little change in manufacturing employment which remained near 12,700 jobs in July but there were roughly 130 more jobs than one year ago. Overall, manufacturing employment has not increased significantly from 2003 and remains below the nearly 13,000 jobs in 2002. Roughly 60 percent of the manufacturing jobs in the region are in the three counties of Price, Rusk, and Taylor.

(see table on page 2)

Labor Force and Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment Estimates for Northwest Wisconsin

(Not seasonally adjusted)	Ashland			Bayfield			Burnett			Douglas			Iron		
	Jul '05	Jun '05	Jul '04	Jul '05	Jun '05	Jul '04	Jul '05	Jun '05	Jul '04	Jul '05	Jun '05	Jul '04	Jul '05	Jun '05	Jul '04
Labor force	10,116	9,829	10,018	8,643	8,575	8,789	8,884	8,776	8,747	23,086	23,160	23,364	3,261	3,185	3,310
Employed residents	9,411	9,260	9,487	8,293	8,160	8,359	8,500	8,359	8,350	21,986	22,090	22,116	3,005	2,967	3,076
Unemployed residents	705	569	531	350	415	430	384	417	397	1,100	1,070	1,248	256	218	234
% unemployed	7.0	5.8	5.3	4.0	4.8	4.9	4.3	4.8	4.5	4.8	4.6	5.3	7.9	6.8	7.1
(Number of jobs with employers in thousands)															
Total Nonfarm jobs	9.4	9.4	9.5	4.6	4.6	4.4	5.6	5.5	5.3	17.0	17.8	17.8	2.2	2.2	2.3
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.3
Manufacturing	1.3	1.3	1.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.3	0.3	0.4
Trade	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.6	3.0	3.0	3.1	0.4	0.4	0.4
Transportation & Utilities	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	2.3	2.3	2.3	0.1	0.0	0.0
Financial Activities	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.1
Education & Health Services	1.8	1.8	1.8	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.7	2.0	1.9	2.0	0.3	0.3	0.3
Leisure & Hospitality	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.2	1.1	1.2	0.7	0.7	0.7	2.4	2.4	2.4	0.3	0.3	0.4
Info, Prof/Bus.Srv, Othr Srv.	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	2.8	2.8	3.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Total Government	2.1	2.1	2.2	1.4	1.5	1.3	1.5	1.4	1.4	2.1	2.9	2.5	0.4	0.4	0.4
(Not seasonally adjusted)	Price			Rusk			Sawyer			Taylor			Washburn		
	Jul '05	Jun '05	Jul '04	Jul '05	Jun '05	Jul '04	Jul '05	Jun '05	Jul '04	Jul '05	Jun '05	Jul '04	Jul '05	Jun '05	Jul '04
Labor force	9,159	9,273	8,898	8,023	7,788	7,912	9,845	9,518	9,865	11,716	11,774	11,851	8,434	8,510	8,457
Employed residents	8,752	8,782	8,539	7,624	7,293	7,518	9,401	9,010	9,433	11,245	11,246	11,364	8,026	8,035	8,042
Unemployed residents	407	491	359	399	495	394	444	508	432	471	528	487	408	475	415
% unemployed	4.4	5.3	4.0	5.0	6.4	5.0	4.5	5.3	4.4	4.0	4.5	4.1	4.8	5.6	4.9
(Number of jobs with employers in thousands)															
Total Nonfarm jobs	7.1	7.2	6.7	6.1	5.8	5.8	7.9	7.6	7.8	9.6	9.7	9.5	6.4	6.5	6.3
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3
Manufacturing	2.6	2.6	2.4	2.0	2.0	2.0	0.5	0.5	0.6	2.8	2.8	2.8	1.0	1.0	1.0
Trade	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.6	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.1	1.1	1.0
Transportation & Utilities	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2
Financial Activities	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Education & Health Services	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.0	0.9
Leisure & Hospitality	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	1.4	1.3	1.3	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.8	0.8
Info, Prof/Bus.Srv, Othr Srv.	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.7	1.6	1.5	0.6	0.6	0.5
Total Government	0.9	1.1	0.9	1.5	1.2	1.3	2.2	2.1	2.2	0.9	1.0	0.9	1.3	1.4	1.3
Northwest Wisconsin															
(Not seasonally adjusted)	Jul '05	Jun '05	Jul '04												
Labor force	101,167	100,388	101,211												
Employed residents	96,243	95,202	96,284												
Unemployed residents	4,924	5,186	4,927												
% unemployed	4.9	5.2	4.9												
Total Nonfarm jobs	75.8	76.2	75.4												
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	4.3	4.2	4.2												
Manufacturing	12.7	12.6	12.5												
Trade	11.0	10.9	10.8												
Transportation & Utilities	3.8	3.8	3.8												
Financial Activities	2.6	2.5	2.5												
Education & Health Services	9.5	9.4	9.4												
Leisure & Hospitality	9.2	8.9	9.2												
Info, Prof/Bus.Srv, Othr Srv.	8.8	8.8	8.8												
Total Government	14.1	15.1	14.3												



Current month preliminary. Estimates based on March 2004 benchmark. Summing from unrounded numbers.

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